

Taking a byte out of education

by Richard Gold

"The computer does not fit into 50 minute time blocks at school," Glenn Cartwright of McGill's Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling declares, as he leans back in his chair.

A button on his telephone lights up as the phone starts to ring.

"You can't just interrupt a student's communication with the computer," he continues as the phone continues to ring.

"...Just as I'm not going to interrupt our communication simply because the telephone is ringing." For the next minute or so, rings punctuate his observations.

Computers will change far more than the time schedule in the classroom. At a recent conference on computers in education, Cartwright revealed his belief that computers "are going to change everything we do."

Specifically, in education, computers can be used to create a rich learning environment. There are two types of such environments.

At the same December conference, hosted by McGill, Educational Psychology and Counselling assistant professor Guy Groen explained the difference between the two environments.

In the first type or "free environment", says Groen, "the student is given a language and can tell the computer to do whatever is permitted by the language." Examples of this type of environment are text-editors, word-processors and programming languages such as FORTRAN, Cobol, Pascal and Logo.

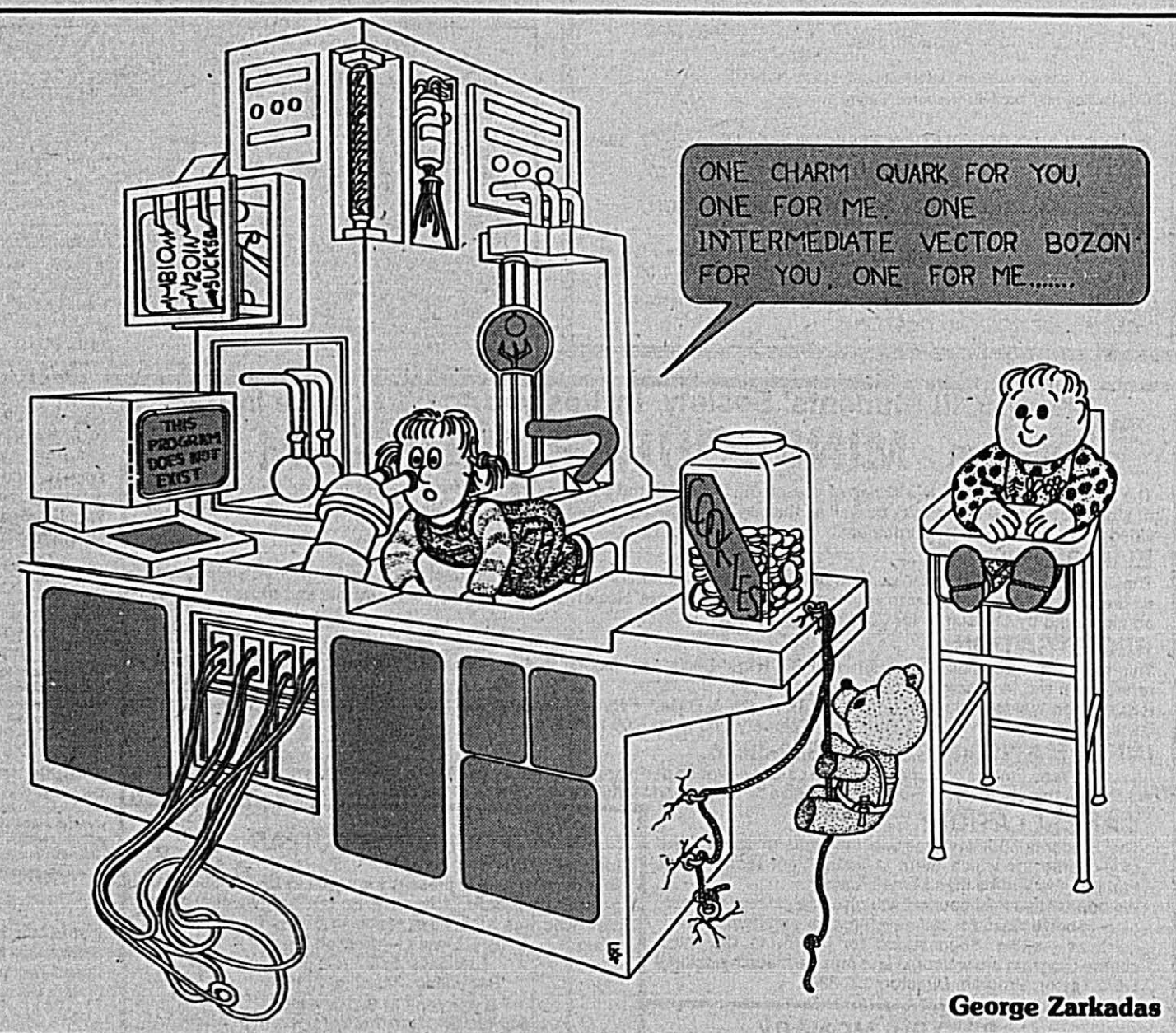
In the second or "constrained environment," he explained, "the student's input is evaluated by the computer and some kind of feedback is provided."

The most noteworthy example of a constrained environment is Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI). This includes drill-and-practice programs which "generate sequences of problems which the student has to answer," says Groen.

A second type of CAI is the tutorial program. A student sits in front of a computer terminal and is tutored in whichever field of study the program is designed for.

"The reasons for tutorial CAI are clear," says Groen. "It is obviously the way to automate the curriculum."

Unfortunately, as Groen points out, "tutorial CAI requires more time and effort to create" than other forms of instruction. In fact, tutorial programs cannot be developed until computer scientists discover how to program certain aspects of human intelligence, namely



George Zarkadas

Natural Language Processing (the parsing and limited understanding of speech).

CAI, although a predominant example of the use of computers in education, is not the only one or the most important. Cartwright believes the computer in any form, creates a rich environment for communication which enhances learning dramatically.

"The central nervous system develops in direct response to the environment and, at the moment, only the computer has the potential to provide the richest possible environment for our students," says Cartwright.

Chair of the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling Howard Stutt believes "teaching in the traditional sense will be done in a more imaginary way" because of the computer.

Stutt worries that computers, rather than bringing everyone to a higher level of education, could "widen the gap between well educated people and those who aren't." He doesn't seem sure this will happen, but neither is he certain that it won't.

Stutt sees large benefits owing to computers in the field of adult education. "Some people think this will be the big growth area — working with adults" to improve competence in work or to retrain them for new jobs.

But the most important application of computers, according to Stutt and Cartwright, is its force in bringing people

together.

Cartwright sees the computer as a catalyst for social interaction and a great "force for peace and understanding." Further, he considers "educational computing as a step on the road to intellectual amplification, improved communication, increased humanism and global consciousness."

Cartwright says McGill has failed to use computers to achieve such goals. "I worry that McGill does not fully exploit the use of its computer for communication." He explains that many of the barriers between people and between departments could be cut down with the help of the computer.

Whatever the long term prospects of the computer, in the short haul there are definite omens of change.

Groen predicts that "in five years computers should be able to handle speech much more easily." Meanwhile, he thinks "the real need is to train the teacher to use the tools that are available in an optimal fashion."

Stutt also sees a period of trial-and-error. He believes the present fervor over home computers will subside, leaving many disappointed in their investments. He predicts that innovative ideas will appear here and there and, if they take hold, will crystallise the future of computers in education.

The longer term prospects for the computer are less certain. The software available at present is of generally low quality. Both large amounts of time and

money are required to develop anything more than an elaborate textbook.

Although computers will make it possible to reach more people at home, it is unlikely to upset the concept of the school. After all, the computer is meant to increase communication between students, not to isolate them in their homes.

Perhaps most important to the future of the computer in the school, is how the students react to it.

"They like it. It puts them in control," says Cartwright. "Kids are not going to permit this revolution to go away." □

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10:00 A.M. — 4:00 P.M.

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continued on page 6



The McGill Students' Society invites you to participate in the WINTER MINI-COURSE PROGRAM

The Mini-Course Program is a series of non-credit, instructional courses designed for the enjoyment and self-development of students at McGill University as well as the general public. It provides for learning opportunities in areas that are not provided for in the University curriculum.

ELIGIBILITY:

These courses are open to the general public; however, members of the McGill Students' Society will enjoy a slightly reduced fee. (N.B. All McGill students are members of the Students' Society except non-resident students and those in programs administered by the Centre for Continuing Education.)

REGISTRATION:

This program is subsidized through your Students' Society membership dues; however, the basic cost of each course is reflected in the fee charged.

Registration will take place in Union 108, Thursday & Friday, February 2nd and 3rd, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. and at the General Office (Union 105) on Thursday, February 2nd from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

INFORMATION: 392-8930, 392-8922

All course fees (unless specified) must be paid in advance during registration by cash only; otherwise, you will not be permitted to take the course. No refunds will be given for any reason whatsoever, except in the case of cancellation of the course.

CANCELLATION:

The Students' Society reserves the right to cancel any mini-course for which there is insufficient registration. Full refunds will be made in this case.

We hope these mini-courses will give you pleasure in learning opportunities for self-development and help you acquire new skills. Suggestions for improving the mini-course program are welcome and may be made by calling Earle Taylor, Program Director, 392-8962.

CARDIO-PULMONARY RESUSCITATION

There are a variety of CPR courses available through the McGill Medical Students' Society. For information concerning times, dates and fees, please call 392-8780.

EXPRESSIVE EXERCISE

Instructor: Lorna Kertland

Lorna Kertland is a graduate of Physical Education at McGill and has 20 years teaching experience in Quebec, Ontario and Japan. Her love of music and movement combine to make this an exciting course in physical expression.

Section 1

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 12:15 noon - 1:15 p.m.
Beginning: February 7, 1984

8 sessions in Union Ballroom (301)

Fee: Special student rates available.

For information call 932-6031

Registration: 20 minimum, 30 maximum

Section 2

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

(All other details the same as Section 1.)

Section 3

Wednesdays: 1:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Beginning: February 8, 1984

4 sessions in Union Ballroom (301)

(All other details the same as Sections 1 and 2)

This course is an artistic approach to an over-all fitness program featuring a wide variety of carefully selected music; both classical and contemporary, stretching, aerobic and strengthening exercises will be used. No previous experience is required.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Instructor: Stephen Eisenberg

Stephen Eisenberg has been involved in free-lance photography and the film industry over the past 7 years. He has also been teaching photography at McGill for 3 years.

Level 1

Thursdays: 8:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Beginning: February 9, 1984

6 sessions in Union B09

Fee: \$32 McGill students; \$7 general public

Registration: 18 minimum, 25 maximum

Photography I is an introductory course aimed at the novice photographer. The course will cover such topics as camera care, nomenclature, focusing, format, shutters, meters, composition, basic exposure mechanics, film, buying new and used equipment and lenses.

FOLK/ROCK GUITAR

Instructor: Brendan Banasik

Brendan Banasik is presently enrolled in BFA (Music) Program at Concordia University. He is a professional musician who has also been teaching guitar for the past 9 years.

Level I — Section 1

Tuesdays: 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Beginning: February 7, 1984

8 sessions in Bronfman 651

Fee: \$42 McGill students; \$47 general public

Registration: 10 minimum/maximum

Level I — Section 2

Tuesdays: 8:30 - 9:30 p.m.

(All other details the same as Section 1.)

This course is designed for those with little or no playing experience. Emphasis is placed on the basics of guitar playing such as chords, strumming and picking techniques. A method book is available from the instructor for \$17.00.

Level II

Tuesdays: 7:15 - 8:15 p.m.

(All other details the same as Level I.)

This course is designed for those who have taken Level I or its equivalent. Items covered in this course include advanced picking techniques, movable (barre) chord forms, finger picking, methods for finding the key & chords of a song by ear, scales for improvisation and alternative tunings. Students are required to supply their own instruments. A method book is available from the instructor for \$17.00.

DRAWING

Instructor: Danièle Lamarche-Dazé

Danièle Lamarche-Dazé has taught several art courses and has studied art at l'école du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal, Collège du Vieux Montréal, UQAM and l'école de peinture chinoise Chang. Presently she is a student at McGill University.

Introductory

Tuesdays: 8:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Beginning: February 7, 1984

6 sessions in Leacock 212

Fee: \$45 McGill students; \$50 general public

Registration: 12 minimum, 18 maximum

This course for beginners presents students with a method of expressing themselves in the vocabulary of lines, shapes and forms. Human models and inanimate objects will be used as subjects. Drawing materials will be charcoal, lead, sanguine and wet media. This course will also deal with contour, outline, silhouette and perspective drawing. Materials required are a 14 X 18 inch sketch book and charcoal sticks.

WEN DO WOMEN'S SELF-DEFENSE

Instructor: Lisa Weintraub

Lisa Weintraub has been involved in Wen-do for the past 4 years. She received her training in Quebec and presently teaches Wen-do at various locations in the Montreal area.

Day of the week: (TBA)

Beginning: (TBA)

6 sessions in Union 425

Fee: \$40 McGill students; \$45 general public

Registration: 12 minimum, 16 maximum

Wen-do is a long-established self-defense course which provides women with easy, practical and systematic methods with which to defend themselves. The course covers physical techniques, verbal self-defense, avoidance and awareness, and discussions on related issues such as: rape, sexual harassment, etc. Weekly practice sessions at McGill are open to graduates of this basic course.

KNITTING

Instructor: Wanda Kaluzny

Wanda Kaluzny is a graduate student in music at McGill University. She has been the music director of the Savoy Society and the Players' Club in previous years and presently conducts the Montreal Chamber Orchestra. Wanda began knitting several years ago as a student of McGill's knitting guru, Nancy Martin.

Introductory

Wednesdays: 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Beginning: February 8, 1984

5 sessions in Union B09

Fee: \$20 McGill students; \$25 general public

Registration: 10 minimum, 15 maximum

This course is for the non-knitter. It will cover the most basic facets of knitting: casting on, casting off, knit stitch, purl stitch, garter stitch, stockinette stitch. Selection of wool, working to tension, and colour coordination will be covered as well. Each student will undertake one simple project, such as a scarf.

Intermediate

Wednesdays: 7:45 - 9:15 p.m.

(All other details the same as the Introductory course.)

This course is aimed at the knitter with a basic knowledge, as outlined in the Introductory course. The Intermediate course will deal with more complicated stitch patterns: cables, popcorns, increasing, decreasing, etc., as well as reading pattern, and creating designs with colour. Students will undertake projects such as vests, sweaters, socks, and hats.

CLASSICAL GUITAR

Instructor: Shawn Bell

Shawn Bell holds a BFA (Music) from Concordia University and has published a series of contemporary works for guitar. He has been teaching guitar for 5 years.

Level I — Section 1

Tuesdays: 1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Beginning: February 7, 1984

8 sessions in Union B09

Fee: \$45 McGill students; \$50 general public

Registration: 4 minimum/maximum

Level I — Section 2

Tuesdays: 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

(All other details the same as Section 1)

This course will cover reading skills and basic classical guitar techniques for those with little or no musical training. Music of the past and present will be introduced through solo and ensemble playing. Students must bring their own classical (nylon string) guitar. A book of studies is available from the instructor for \$10.00.

Level II

Tuesdays: 2:45 - 3:45 p.m.

(All other details the same as Level I.)

This course will continue from Classical Guitar Level I and is designed for those with some prior experience playing classical guitar. Theory, performance and interpretation will be covered in greater depth.

CONTEMPORARY JAZZ DANCE

Instructor: Deborah Mackenzie

Deborah Mackenzie has had professional experience in ballet, modern, tap and jazz dance in Vancouver, New York, Toronto and Montreal and has done choreographies in afro and rock jazz. She was the founder of the McGill Jazz Club in 1977.

Introductory

Mondays & Wednesdays: 12 noon - 1:30 p.m.

Beginning: February 13, 1984

14 sessions in Union Ballroom (301)

Fee: \$30 McGill students; \$35 general public

Registration: 25 minimum, 30 maximum

This course will introduce the student to the basic jazz exercises and fundamentals of jazz dance. Students are required to bring leotards and stirrup tights or sleeveless skirts and loose pants — it is essential that the knees are covered and feet are bare. Students may change in adjacent washrooms. Both men and women are welcome.

Intermediate-Advanced

Wednesdays: 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Beginning: February 15, 1984

7 sessions in Union Ballroom (301)

Fee: \$20 McGill students; \$25 general public

Registration: 20 minimum, 30 maximum

This course is designed for the student who is already familiar with the fundamentals of jazz dance.

Workshop

Saturdays: 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Beginning: February 18, 1984

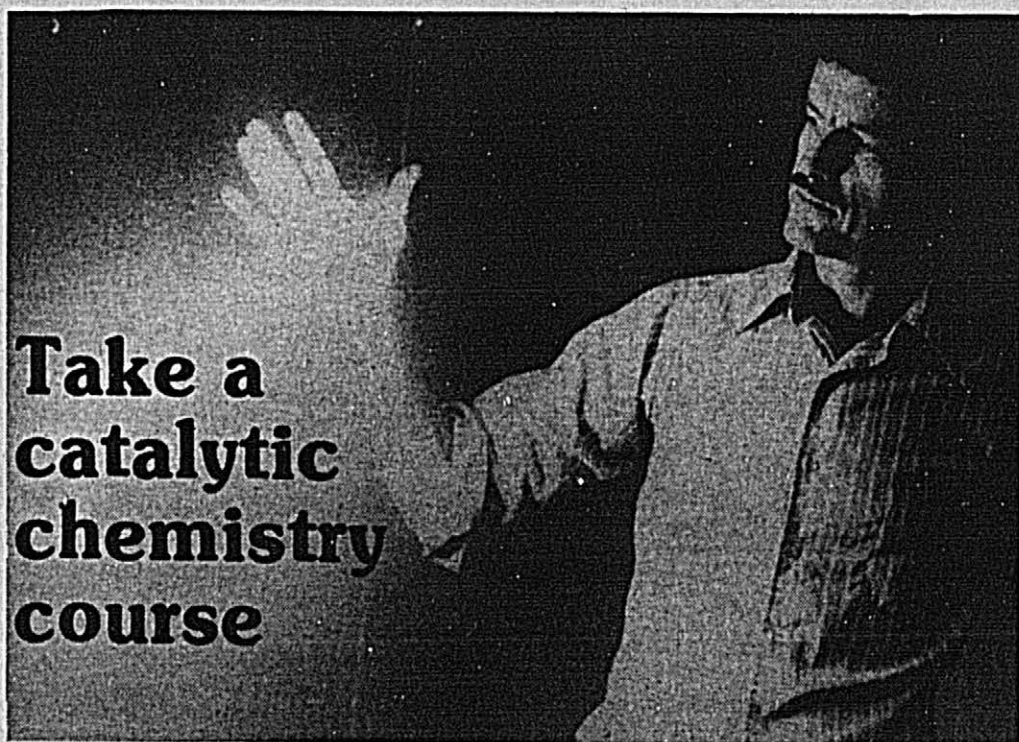
7 sessions in Union Ballroom (301)

Fee: \$20 McGill students; \$25 general public

Registration: 20 minimum, 30 maximum

This Saturday morning workshop will be a basic workout class for students at all levels of jazz dance. Students in the other two courses are encouraged to register as well as those simply wanting a basic workout in jazz techniques.

Take a catalytic chemistry course



Harpp plays with a flash of burning cellulose nitrate.

by Selwyn De Souza

Have you ever had the urge to know the chemical composition of your food? Have you ever wondered what lies behind the propulsion of rockets? Have you sometimes pondered the thought, late Saturday night, of what is the make-up of your lipstick and its importance in the global community? Probably not. However, the 768 students who are presently registered in the course 180-150B, 'Chemistry in the Modern World', are seeking the true meaning of life and the practical dimensions and applications of chemistry in daily affairs.

The popularity of the course, conducted by three chemistry professors, Dr. David Harpp of McGill, Dr. Ariel Fenster of Dawson College, and Dr. Joe Schwarcz of Vanier College, is reflected in the increasing student enrolment in the course. The size of the class has increased from a total of 65 pupils since the inauguration of the course in 1982 to 230 students at the end of that year, to the presently phenomenal number of 768.

Fieldhouse Auditorium has managed to provide a fairly favorable environment in which these 'well-mannered, attentive, and quiet students can learn' as Dr. Harpp explains. What's most special about the course is the many arts, management, and education students who are taking the course along with a number from the Faculty of Science.

The arts students who have taken the course have left it with increased enthusiasm and renewed interest in science. The course covers material ranging from the simple chemistry of food over vitamins, food additives, water, pollution, cosmetics, over-the-counter and street drugs, plastics and photography to household chemistry. The practical applicability of this course is evident in this list of subject information.

If this seems like an informa-

tion overload for otherwise educationally deprived arts students, it fortunately is not. Simple equations are used with little emphasis on chemical formulae.

In this class, composed of a fifty-fifty split of science and non-science students, Harpp has maintained the conscious need to recognize that some non-science students may never have been exposed to many of the equations and scientific notation in the course and organised tutorials to compensate for this handicap.

Harpp acknowledges that the lack of a scientific background of many students originates in high school. "The majority of students exiting high school have had very little contact with science." On a positive tone, 'Chemistry in the Modern World' manages to coordinate successfully an equal mix of chemistry and non-science subject matter. Efforts have been made to demystify aspects of science. A small element of consumer-oriented analysis has also been incorporated into the course to diversify the lectures and add some flavour.

Many students who have taken the course will testify to the fact that the visual animation in the lectures has provided a means of enlightening them on a captivating level. In addition to the slides, there have been gunpowder demonstrations, and rubber and urethane foam investigations. In one class, Harpp did an experiment, culminating in a meal. Schwarcz was asked to give a verdict and provide a breakdown of the food related components.

Some interesting features of the course included the launching of a small rocket in Leacock 132, a probable first for the building. To everyone's disappointment, the rocket fizzled on the launch-pad; however, after class, the device was safely propelled into inner space.

The three professors have managed to integrate their respective abilities and for-

mulate a meaningful course outline. The three musqueteers have given lectures from Newfoundland to the Rockies. In the summer of 1980 to 1981, a series of lectures concerning acid rain, colour, plastics and a Magic Show was given at Man and his World. With the interpersonal chemistry present, the trio was able to develop a course that would attract a polarization of both arts and science students from McGill University.

Schwarcz and Fenster, McGill Ph.D. graduates, serve in an auxiliary capacity in the Department of Chemistry at McGill. They are each paid with a fat cheque of \$0.00, not to mention a vacation pay of \$0.00. They have voluntarily chosen to participate in 'Chemistry in the Modern World' because they find it a real challenge.

This interactive 'Synchronicity III' has probably been one of the major reasons why the number of non-science students enrolled in the course has doubled in the past three years. Due to the feedback that the course has generated, there has been a proposal by Harpp to create a second course oriented towards technological developments in society. Forensic chemistry, chemistry of the car, and water and air pollution will be examined if the course is approved by the administration.

In the final analysis, it is apparent that the level of scientific consciousness has been raised for both arts and science students taking the course. Science is gaining recognition among arts students as a viable force with which to be reckoned. Man can no longer live on arts alone, but on the wonders and magic of modern chemistry. As a last note to all artsy moles on campus, get together; call Avogadro's number 6.02×10^{23} and react to take some science courses. If you lack some initiative, I can tell you that 'Chemistry in the Modern World' is a great catalyst.

Calorimeter

Biochemists are not real Chemists

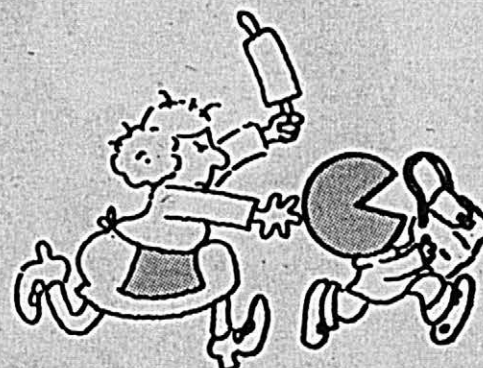
It appears there is a bit of friendly confrontation going on between the McGill Chemistry and Biochemistry Departments. The advertisement for a party held recently by the Chemistry Department read:

COST:

Chemists \$2.00

Biochemists \$12.00

All others \$3.00



What if your Mom plays Pacman?

Parents and communities are becoming increasingly concerned over the hazards of a new form of addiction, reports Psychiatric News.

"Thousands of youngsters are skipping school, filching their mother's purses and even breaking into parking meters. This would not be new except that the addiction is in question to video games," says a Californian pediatrician. He says the preoccupation with video games can become a mental health hazard if left unchecked.

Plumber's Pot on ice

There is only one negative aspect about the snow house the architecture students are building. The Plumber's Pot will finally have an office.



Sex in Russia on the upswing

After a lengthy debate between bureaucrats and parents, sex education is finally being taught in some Soviet Schools, stated Time magazine.

It seems that sexual dissatisfaction is viewed as a key factor in the Soviet Union's high divorce rate. In major cities almost fifty percent of marriages end in divorce, while the figure is one-third for rural areas. Two-thirds of the divorces are initiated by women. The concern of Soviet bureaucrats is probably more to do with the declining birthrate than marital bliss.

We don't need no education

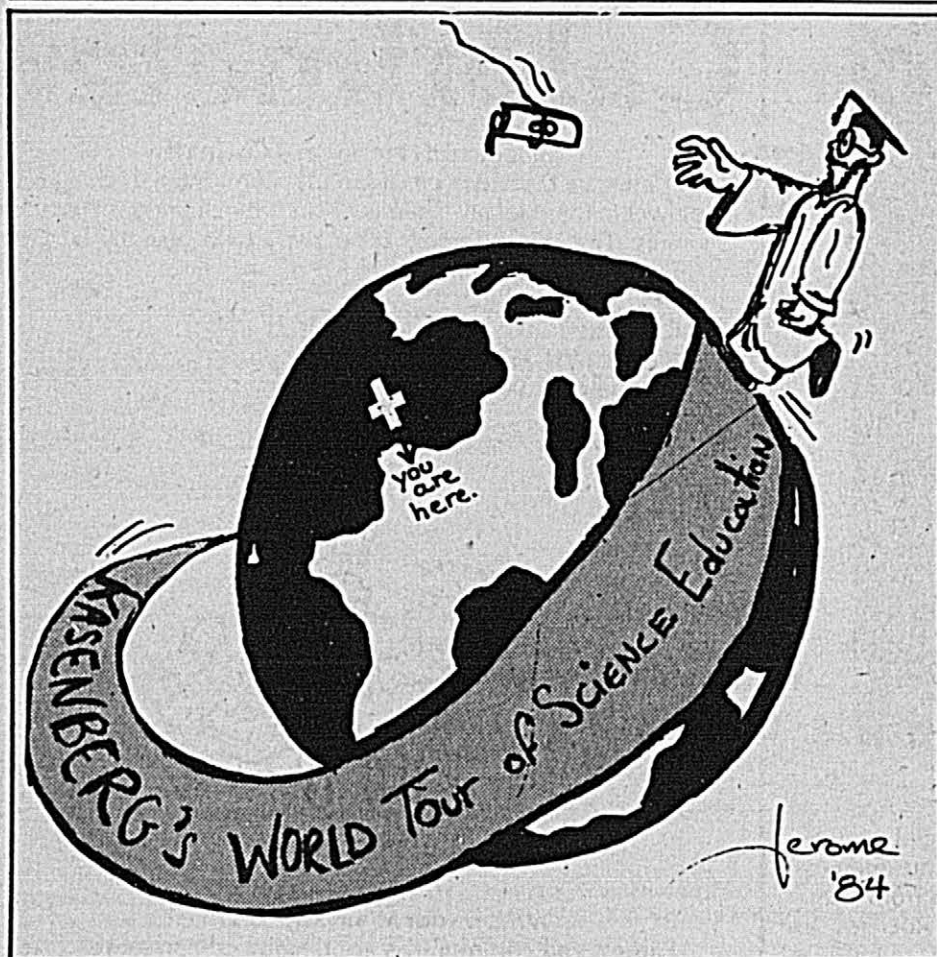
Many high school students aren't happy with the way science is being taught. One student wrote, "Since all the labs have been done before, everyone knows the results beforehand and fudges their own results to correlate with the expected data. My lab partner and I have never gotten one of our labs to work yet. Once when we were doing a water displacement lab, our sink plugged up and we displaced water all over the floor. When ever we do a lab with a bunsen burner, we can't get the burner started. The one time one of our labs did work, we changed our data because no one else got the same results."

So goes it in high school. Don't worry, it gets even worse in university.

Heather Peniuk

Keith Janzen

Maureen Peniuk



by Todd Kasenberg

"Aunt Izelda likes Montréal, Pumpkin Pie, Trees and Valleys," I reverently intoned, convinced that I was about to summon a demon. "Alanine, Isoleucine, Leucine, Methionine, Proline, Phenylalanine, Tryptophan and Valine," I added, using my original intonation as a memory aid for recalling the uncharged, hydrophobic amino acids.

Is too much emphasis placed on memorisation in North American science programs? And what about the differences between science programs in other parts of the world and our own?

Answering these questions required a brisk run around campus interviewing a number of McGill professors who studied in countries other than Canada and the United States. The professors revealed a number of surprising differences between our system of education and their own.

Those interviewed seemed united in their opinion that memorisation was far more important in their educational past than it presently is in North America. They proposed the North American thrust is now towards specialised learning and up-to-date information.

In France, they like to memorise

Dawson College Chemistry professor Ariel Fenster, who, along with David Harpp and Joseph Schwartz, teaches the highly popular "Chemistry in the Modern World" course at McGill, talks of the emphasis on memorisation in the educational system in France.

"France is even more on memorisation than North America. You learn a lot of material, but there's not much of a chance to think."

He adds that while an American scientist may be more knowledgeable in his/her particular field, the French scientist is more readily adaptable to the type of knowledge advances that are continually occurring in the scientific world.

Fenster attributes this to the fact that "the French stress broad knowledge," whereas, philosophically, North America seems to stress earlier specialisation. "I was forced to take philosophy, biology, history, geography, and three languages in my

final year of high school," he said.

As well, he stressed the emphasis on good working habits which are "developed prior to the obtaining of a baccalaureate certificate, which is the equivalent of a high school diploma," when asked of pre-university preparation in France.

Strict and straight-laced in India

India, like France also differs from the North American education system. McGill Biology professor Dr. Bashid Mukherjee, who obtained his bachelor's degree from the University of Calcutta, said his education in India was far too rigid.

"We had a core curriculum that everyone had to go through; one is required to study chemistry, physics and mathematics, regardless of program. In India, there are no option courses.

"Everyone progresses at the same rate; you don't see U2 or U3 students in a U1 class, because failing a single class means you repeat the entire year," said Mukherjee.

Mukherjee added that "one drawback to the system in India is that the syllabus is organised by the university for the affiliated undergraduate colleges. It is very difficult to introduce up-to-date material, because that represents a violation of the course outline. All too often, while students may have a good core background, they are blind to the new advances in their fields of study."

Learning in India is solid, and scientific principles are systematically built. According to Mukherjee, the transition between high school and university is relatively painless, as in France, as good work habits have already been developed.

Oxford: only a nice place to visit

Although Mukherjee saw some good points about his education in India, Physics professor Richard Harris had little to say that was favourable about his alma mater, Oxford.

"The Oxford system has little to recommend; it is not one where a student takes individual courses and writes exams following these courses," he said. "At Oxford, one studies all of the material in the degree program, and then has one week of cumulative examinations, covering three years of work. It just wipes you out."

"I would say that North America is optimum; compared to Oxford, memorisation is not emphasized here, although differences may exist between the different departments and different professors."

As for the curriculum, Harris thought there might be some change in emphasis, but he was sure his colleagues in Great Britain teach the same material that he teaches.

As evidence, he pointed to the occasional British graduate student working on his Master's or Doctorate at McGill, who seems to have a similar, if not identical background. The one advantage that Oxford does have, according to Harris, is that a student is able to see the inter-relation of all of the different facets of a particular subject area, such as physics.

Grad students: Made in Japan

"Memorisation is necessary in biology. You cannot escape without it," said Yutaka Nishioka, who completed his undergraduate and Master's studies at the University of Tokyo. "Scientists must be absolutely familiar with the essentials in order to understand the applications."

"I would say that the major difference between the Japanese and the North America science programs is the teaching structure. In Japan, the team approach is stressed. Individual creativity is not particularly encouraged; competition is between teams of scientists, and not individuals," he added.

This would account for the North American criticism that the Japanese scientist is a great imitator or modifier, but not particularly creative.

Nishioka emphasises the stress put upon good study habits for students entering science in a Japanese university since, "entrance to a university is highly competitive, and students who have a good memory or who are very disciplined will succeed in the entrance examinations."

"We must follow a very rigid academic program, consisting not only of science, but of literature and other arts. I personally feel this to be an advantage to the system," he adds.

"Another important difference in Japan is the lack of a CEGEP equivalent — a student spends that extra time at university."

There is more of a problem in North America with over-crowded classrooms, he said. "Japanese science classes have 100 students at most. This makes for an excellent learning environment."

Italian science: A mess

Italian schools have changed quite a bit over the past two decades, said Professor Milic-Emili, who graduated from the University of Milan with a degree in Medicine. Milic-Emili teaches respiratory physiology for the Faculty of Medicine, and is the former chairperson of Physiology at McGill.

"When I went to Milan, there was a rigorous screening procedure; testing in anatomy, physiology and biochemistry yielded a 50 per cent failure rate. You could repeat the exams as often as you liked. Examinations were oral."

"We were not obliged to go to lectures — we could pass our tests if we studied on our own. We often formed study groups when professors were poor."

Milic-Emili said that one major advantage of the Italian system of his days was the preparation of the students entering university from the gymnasias, which are Italian high schools. "In the gymnasium, students were taught how to work," he noted.

"Memory was highly stressed in subjects such as histology and anatomy; these subjects were all memory, and so much of it. As well, when we had poor teachers, we were virtually forced to memorise the textbook." He added, however, that reasoning was encouraged in such subjects as biochemistry and physiology.

"The Italian system is a mess today — at McGill, the graduate doctors are both safe and reliable. In Italy, they have over-produced doctors; from what I understand, last year's fresh(wo)man med class at Milan had 4000 students. But the old system is still stressed — the gymnasias are still producing students with good working habits, and doctors can still manage to get a good clinical training."

Now for some Polish science

Visiting mathematics professor Michal Szurek noted that the major difference between the Polish mathematics program and its North American equivalent is the stress on theory.

Szurek, who is working at McGill as a result of a one semester grant from the University, is on the academic staff of the University of Warsaw, his alma mater. Prior to his visit to Canada, he taught at Warsaw and at a local high school for mathematically-gifted children.

"We are required to take written exams, but in Poland, professors have the option to give an oral examination. Obviously, this is a very exhaustive process for both the student and the professor, and when classes are large, many colleagues may be required to complete these exams. These oral exams test a student's understanding of mathematical theory; I haven't seen that type of test at McGill."

Szurek was forced to memorise a great number of formulae, and he thinks this practice is not necessarily good. "It was quite complicated. Understanding the why is what should be important."

And what does all this mean?

Compared to universities in other parts of the world, Canadian students appear to have it easy. Our system of education is not as restrictive nor as rigorous. Whether this situation is favourable or not is up to the student.



Richard Harris is happier here in North America. For him, "the Oxford system has little to recommend."

Jump over the academic fence

by Ann Loewen and Annette Walker

Should students in the Faculty of Arts be required to take courses in Science as part of their degree program, and similarly should science students have to complete arts courses in order to graduate?

The issues surrounding this question can be quite complex and answers are not easy to find. For that matter, should students in other faculties also be required to take courses outside of their discipline? The issue is really one of the desirability of broadening one's educational background, and what is the best way to go about doing so.

Dr. R. Rigelhof, the Associate Dean of Science, as well as a professor in the Department of Mathematics, believes specifying certain courses in arts, which science students would have to take in order to graduate, is not a good thing. For one thing, he points out it is difficult to decide upon an appropriate requirement. A course in English literature may be an obvious choice, but many students were required to take English courses at the CEGEP level and have no interest in pursuing this field of study now that they are in university.

Rather, Dr. Rigelhof would favour a more general type of program where a student would be required to take a certain number of credits from another faculty with the course choice left to the student.

"One shouldn't wear blinders when at university," says Dr. Rigelhof. "One should be allowed to pursue other interests."

Indeed, by means of their electives, most McGill students could obtain a very broad education, if they so desired. However, science students who complete their degrees with more than one or two courses in the social sciences or humanities are a rarity, as are arts students who have had an exposure to the basic sciences at the university level.

Dr. G. Piggott, Associate Dean of Arts, thinks students are not using electives effectively because they "are not prepared to take advantage of the sort

and the social sciences."

This is certainly a goal worth working towards, yet one that may be difficult to achieve. As they are currently set up,



of range they should". A background in mathematics, Piggott points out, is often lacking and thus limits the courses in science that an Arts student can take.

Ideally, Piggott thinks, "Arts students should not be permitted to graduate without exposure to some science but, by the same token, no student in science, engineering, law or management, should be permitted to graduate from an institute without having been exposed to the best of the humanities

many of the programs at McGill do not allow students to obtain the broad intellectual training they may desire.

Some honours programs in science, for example, allow for fewer than 10 credits in electives in a 90 credit (three year) program. Most programs in the Faculty of Engineering require, besides core courses and technical electives, a total of only six or nine credits from the humanities, social sciences, and administrative studies.

Besides being questionable in terms of what sort of people are coming out of such narrow and concentrated degree programs, there is also the problem that people may be so specialised in their fields that they cannot interact with those people in other, but related fields.

This point was brought up by Dr. I. Hinberg who is currently with the Bureau of Medical Devices at the Department of Health and Welfare in Ottawa. He graduated in Honours Chemistry from McGill about 15 years ago, when that program had no electives whatsoever.

Biochemists and biomedical engineers are both working in related areas he indicates; yet, they may know nothing about each other's field simply due to lack of exposure. Hinberg foresees future gaps growing in areas such as bio-engineering and bio-electronics where there simply is not the educated personnel available.

In a world where no one can avoid being affected by and coming into contact with the rapid advances of technology, an understanding of the background of these advances is crucial and one which a well-rounded university education could supply.

Exposure to computers, if only to become more familiar with them, is an area that many think is important now and will become more so in the future.

"I don't think people should go through life being scared of

computers," said Rigelhof. "But I don't feel I should require them to take it (a course in computer literacy)."

Where, then, does the answer lie to the problem of expanding one's education, if not in forcing students to do so?

Dr. John Southin, a professor in the Biology department who began his university studies as a student in Classical Languages, does not think that "requiring people to take a course is going to, in the main, instill a fondness for that discipline. It's only when people come to the discipline of their own volition that it is likely to have a beneficial effect on them."

Southin thinks the solution to obtaining a greater crossing over of students between disciplines is through more active encouragement by student advisors when choosing electives.

In this area, he said, "the real tragedy at McGill, is that there isn't encouragement for people to take courses in Arts if they're in Science or vice versa."

Many students would agree with Southin's assessment of how advising is lacking in this respect. For most, encounters with advisors consist of a visit in September lasting only as long as it takes to read over and sign a study-plan form.

McGill students, already known for their apathy, should not feel the issue is out of their hands. In fact, Rigelhof acts also as a departmental advisor to students in mathematics and computer science and contends he has often "encouraged students to take courses outside their program, but I was rarely successful."

Perhaps it is a lack of motivation on the students' part that accounts for the limited exposure they are getting to other disciplines.

Some universities, such as McMaster and Harvard, have what is known as a 'core curriculum'. This is a body of courses, including mathematics, philosophy, natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences, that are required as part of the degree.

While this would be difficult to implement into a concentrated professional program like engineering and medicine, Piggott said in the less concentrated programs, it may be possible.

"Within the flexibility of the program that we have, we could build up more requirements that would better prepare our students for being good citizens" by means of the core curriculum approach for both Arts and Sciences, added Piggott.

One final and sobering thought is that care must be taken not to overemphasize what a variety of courses will do for a person as a human being. As Southin points out, there have been, "too many cases of people who can rhapsodize over Schubert's sonatas at night and shovel people into the gas ovens the next day...I don't think that taking courses in the humanities is going to make someone humane, nor do I think that requiring courses in science is going to make people less superstitious."

The ultimate goal should be, perhaps, as Piggott says, "(for) all students to benefit from the wide range of ideas that are available in the university." As students we can take that first step and let ourselves be open to those ideas.



Poor science student caught sneaking into the Arts Building to get the artsy courses she craves.

daily - Chris Westbury

Crowded classes

by Tania Luhde

Have you been stepped on by your professor lately? Do you get that claustrophobic feeling in Leacock Stadium 132? Have you been lucky enough to have your friend save you a seat on the floor recently?

Most students will have already noticed what is generally considered to be a recent phenomenon: the high population in science classes.

The large number of science students means that many have to sit on the floor of Leacock 132, the largest lecture hall available; there are more students per lab demonstrator, there are more multiple choice exams, and there are extended waiting times at the computer terminals. Assignments, lab reports, and exams take longer

to be marked, and there are less opportunities to talk to overworked T.A.'s. These few examples demonstrate an important point: while in the short run it is difficult, if not impossible, to increase and expand the physical resources available, it should be easier to do so in the human sector.

Due to government cutbacks; however, the university finds itself forced to respond in the opposite direction. This situation has resulted in the rumoured 'back-to-basics' movement at McGill, which is supposed to be an attempt to decrease the number of students at all levels. Admission to and remaining in the university are gradually becoming more difficult.

Why this increase, when the growth of the pool of university-age people was supposed to have stabilised by now, perhaps even declined? Many people are seeking a

university education rather than looking for and not finding a job.

Every student is familiar with student overpopulation and what it means to her, and most will recall only its negative aspects—but every coin has two sides. A prominent professor once stated that his 'A' students sit in the middle section directly in front of him, the 'B's a bit behind them, the 'C's even further behind and on the sides, and, finally, the less academically successful in the extreme back.

The truth of this statement is debatable, but it is a fact that those who prefer to be silent observers or parasites who copy assignments find it easier not to be noticed in the crowd. Punctuality as a character trait, if not already present, must be developed in order to obtain a seat. Another advantage of a large class size is there are more people to study with, and fewer and shorter assignments and essays. Additionally, in labs, those students who prefer to work independently ap-

preciate the relative freedom they enjoy due to the lack of attentive critical supervision.

It has been claimed that professors are reduced to 'performing', as in a circus. However, a good case can be made that lectures have become more tightly knit and succinct because the professor cannot afford to have discussions during or after class with all 400 students in her course. Also, less supervision and fewer assignments force the studios to work more on their own and with their own initiative.

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The influx of more people from varied backgrounds enlarges the circle of possible friends and acquaintances, and encourages the ability to see the world beyond the ivory tower confines of the university environment. This is perhaps the most important and valuable change due to the increased class and lab sizes: more people from all walks of life are now being exposed to the privilege of higher education and are consequently educating others in the process.



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continued from page 2

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361 — ARTICLES FOR SALE

Cheap Plane ticket to Vancouver February 16-26. Quick sale. Call Susan 843-3203. Leave message if not in.

Military surplus sale — EXXA — 30% to 50% off everything — one week only — pack saks, P-coats etc 1477 Mansfield, 1210 St Denis.

Booksale at NO EXIT bookshop. 3636 St. Laurent. From Feb 1st — Feb 4th. 25% off all English stock. French books half price.

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One ride needed to Syracuse N.Y. leaving Thursday Feb 2nd or Friday Feb 3rd & returning Sunday Feb 5th — expenses shared. Please call Elissa 286-0569.

372 — LOST & FOUND

Lost: a very small blue case with a pair of contact lenses inside. If found, please phone 286-0269.

Found — 1 scarf in Leacock on Fri at 1:00 pm. 1 leather cap in the same building & time. 1 pair of women's gloves in F.D.A.

building. To claim — call 695-8731 after 4:30 pm and ask for Doug.

Lost antique Victorian paste brooch with blue stone between Pine near University and McLennan Library via campus. Great sentimental value. Reward; please call Christine if found 932-0634 or messages only 932-0016.

Would the person who took a GREEN ARMY JACKET from Gerts II on Friday please return at least its contents to Student Society lost and found.

385 — NOTICES

Fight the high cost of getting drunk! Make your own beer and enter the KRT beer brewing contest. \$3 fee covers everything. Phone 286-0137 (Tony).

GROUP COUNSELLING at the McGill Counselling Service for personal, social or emotional help and support. Free and confidential. Fridays 3:00 — 4:30. Phone 392-5119 for information.

It's not too expensive to ski 'cause 22 bucks is the fee. You'll be wanting to yodel on your favourite mogul. Smuggler's Notch on Feb 3.

ARE EMOTIONS making your life unmanageable. Try Emotions Anonymous, Wednesday evenings, 7:45, at the Erskine and American Church, 3407 Du Musée at

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387 — VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers needed for the Cerebral Palsy Telethon Feb 4th & 5th at Complex Desjardins. Contact Community McGill Union 408 or phone 392-8937 for more info.

All those interested in volunteering in prison please come to meeting 4 pm Thurs. Feb. 2; Rm 3, 1215 Visitation St. (Beaudry Metro). For info call Paul 738-2982.

Patient companion needed for a nine year old autistic boy living in N.D.G. Two hours a week required — contact Community McGill. Union 408. 392-8937.

TODAYS

Bake Sale — to benefit the Semaine d'Information Anti-Apartheid Awareness Week. Lobby of Leacock, 11h-14h.

Gays and Lesbians of McGill — meeting at 16h on People: Why we need them. Check bulletin board by Union 417 for room number.

The Jewish Feminine Mystique — guest lecturer Rabbi M. New will explore the Jewish perspective of "woman". 20h at Chabad House, 3429 Peel. 842-6616.

Kabbalah — A new class on kabbalah begins at 12h led by Rabbi M. New at Chabad House.

Tertulia — desde las 2 hasta las 5. Bronfman Spanish Lounge — piso 6. Café y Pastel.

McGill Womyn's Union — General business meeting — important decisions will be made. 17h in Union 423.

Feminist Film Series — Short experimental films by womyn. 20h in Leacock 132. Free popcorn for first 500.

Armenian Students' Association — get-together from 12h-15h in Union 403.

AIIEEC McGill — social committee meeting at the office at 16h30.

Amnesty International — Urgent Action meeting at 17h in Union 415. All welcome.

McGill Foster Parents' Association — general meeting at 17h in Union 415. All welcome.

Circle K — meeting at 20h in Union 408.

Film Society — presents Undergraduate Filmmakers followed by discussion. 20h in Leacock 132. General meeting in L132 at

19h15.

History Students' Association Film Series — presents Night and Fog and Olympia at 15h in Leacock 132. Free.

Savoy Society's — Pirates of Penzance tickets now on sale: \$5 for all Fri. and Sat. shows, \$4 for student and seniors on Thurs., \$5 for others, \$3 for students and seniors on Wed., \$4 for others. For reservations and information: Sadles Box Office (392-8926) or Savoy Society (392-8983). Shows at 20h Feb. 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18 in Moysse Hall, Arts Bldg.

Pre-law — presents the Verdict on video in Leacock 112 at 16h.

Pollack Concert Hall — Concert Choir and wind ensemble with flute orchestra. Program includes Stravinsky's "Mass" and Brant's "Angels & Devils". 20h.

Winter Carnival Tournament — Judges needed for Int'l Debating tournament. More info in Union lobby 12h-14h. Training sessions in Union 310 at 12h and 14h.

Sister Anne's Prayer Group — in the green room of the Newman Centre, 3484 Peel. 19h30. 392-6711.

Christianity & Socialism in a Canadian Context — a study/action group for people interested in exploring "the Idols in our Midst — Is religion liberating in Canada?" Facilitated by McGill chaplains at the Newman Centre. 16h.

Christian Meditation — at 12h led by Benedictine Oblate Derek Smith. Green room of Newman Centre.

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10:00 am - 5:00 pm - Scavenger Hunt - Union Lobby

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THURSDAY FEBRUARY 2nd

McLympics - Surprise Event no 2 - in front of Arts Bldg.

12:00 pm - Slave Auction in Gertrudes (proceeds for CHF)

1:00 pm - McLympics - Tug of War - location TBA

7:00 pm - Movie - Pink Floyd: The Wall - FDAA - \$1.50

8:00 pm - JAZZ, JOKES in THE MITZ WITH THE YUK YUK TOURING SHOW featuring MIKE MACDONALD

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FRIDAY FEBRUARY 3rd

7:00 am - Ski Day - Buses leave Union for Smugglers Notch Vt.

\$22.00 Downhill - \$16.00 X-Country - Includes transportation and lift

Tickets at Sadies

8:00 pm - REGGAE NIGHT in the MITZ

8:00 pm - Cultural Show by ISA

10:00 pm - Dance and Groove to the sound of MESSENAH

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Students or persons wishing to nominate a student may pick up application kits at the Students' Society General Office, 3480 McTavish Street, room 105 (next to Sadie's).

Upon completion, application forms may be returned to the Scarlet Key Committee through Internal Mail at the Students' Society information desk or in Porters' Offices in McGill buildings.

If you require additional information please enquire at the Students' Society information desk or speak to a member of the Scarlet Key Committee.

The selection Committee will review applications on a regular basis and will announce award recipients or invite applicants for an interview as appropriate.

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